



TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

KEN GIVENS
COMMISSIONER

REGULATORY SERVICES
ANIMAL HEALTH

Tennessee Voluntary Johne's Disease Program Announcement

Johne's disease is a common and costly intestinal disease of dairy and beef cattle throughout the United States. The disease is caused by the bacteria *Mycobacterium paratuberculosis*, which invades the intestinal and lymph node tissue of ruminant animals causing diarrhea and weight loss. The disease is not limited to cattle, having been diagnosed in sheep, goats, deer, llamas, elk, bison and other free-roaming ruminants. Johne's disease typically starts as an infection in calves, although clinical signs do not usually appear until cattle are two to five years of age. Since there is no cure for Johne's disease, good management practices and surveillance programs are critical to limiting the financial impact of the disease.

The Tennessee Voluntary Johne's Disease Program has been established to provide the Tennessee cattle industry guidelines for the control and prevention of Johne's disease. The program consists of three basic elements:

- (1) Education – to inform producers about Johne's disease, including cause, clinical signs, transmission, etc. and to provide information on biosecurity.
- (2) Management – to work with producers to establish good management practices on their farm to control and prevent Johne's disease.
- (3) Testing (optional) – to determine whether the herd goes into the Status Program, which is a "test negative" component, or the Control Program, which is a "test positive" component.

It is recommended that the herd owner and the owner's veterinarian, in cooperation with state and federal veterinarians, conduct a Johne's disease herd risk assessment on the farm to assess that farm's relative risk for Johne's disease and implement biosecurity and management practices to control and prevent the disease. The Tennessee Voluntary Johne's Disease Management Plan is designed to inform herd owners of the risk factors for the spread of Johne's disease, implement appropriate management, and formulate surveillance testing for Johne's disease on a particular farm.

Following the management practices of the Tennessee Voluntary Johne's Program helps the herd owner be more profitable, more biosecure and prevents more disease in general. Many of the disease prevention management practices used in the Johne's program are used in other diseases. Also, the Johne's program fits nicely with the upcoming National ID Program.

For more information or if you would like to enroll in the program, please call the Tennessee State Veterinarian's office at (615) 837-5120, or contact Dr. Charlie Hatcher at (615) 837-5183 or charles.hatcher@state.tn.us. Below you will find an Enrollment Form for our Tennessee Voluntary Johne's Disease Program. This form must be signed by the owner. The form can be mailed back to Dr. Hatcher at the address listed below:

Dr. Charles Hatcher
Staff Veterinarian
Johne's Disease Coordinator
Department of Agriculture
P. O. Box 40627
Nashville, TN 37204

Or, you may fax your completed form to: (615) 837-5250.